

- I. God can use anything or anyone to complete His purposes (1-9)
- A. King Xerxes, was a dominate conquerer who controlled much of the known world, but he was neither moral or disciplined
1. As foretold in the Book of Daniel, Xerxes, the son of Darius I, will face defeat at the hands of the Greeks. He ruled 485-465 BC.
 - a) The Jews of this time were a post exilic remnant in Persia; they were vulnerable
 - (1) God has set the stage to rescue the Jews from a sensuous ruler and an evil official (Haman)
- B. 2 Peter 2:4-9 - **4** For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to pits of darkness, reserved for judgment; **5** and did not spare the ancient world, but preserved Noah, a [a]preacher of righteousness, with seven others, when He brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly; **6** and *if* He condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to destruction by reducing *them* to ashes, having made them an example to those who would live ungodly *lives* thereafter; **7** and *if* He rescued righteous Lot, oppressed by the sensual conduct of unprincipled men **8** (for by what he saw and heard *that* righteous man, while living among them, felt *his* righteous soul tormented day after day by *their* lawless deeds), **9** *then* the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from [b]temptation, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment for the day of judgment
- II. The absence of true security ruins communion (13-22)
- A. Xerxes, who was drunk, proves he is not entirely secure, and asks to have his wife come to display her beauty
1. The exact account or expectations of this showing are unknown, but in the mind of Vashti, daughter of the King of Lydia, this was an unacceptable request
 - (1) Two things can be understood from this section concerning the kings request: He loved only himself and honored those who brought him honey and not correction
 - (2) And insecurity and excess will destroy any possibility of relationship
 - b) The fallout of her refusal was quelled by her expulsion and it is upon this stage that Esther enters the picture
 - (1) God has prepared Esther through the tutoring of her uncle Mordecai, a man of valor and character
- B. 1 Peter 3:1-7 - In the same way, you wives, be submissive to your own husbands so that even if any *of them* are disobedient to the word, they may be won without a word by the behavior of their wives, **2** as they observe your chaste and [a]respectful behavior. **3** Your adornment must not be *merely* external—braiding the hair, and wearing gold jewelry, or putting on dresses; **4** but *let it be* the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God. **5** For in this way in former times the holy women also, who hoped in God, used to adorn themselves, being submissive to their own husbands; **6** just as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, and you have become her children if you do what is right [b]without being frightened by any fear. **7** You husbands in the same way, live with *your wives* in an understanding way, as with [c]someone weaker, since she is a woman; and show her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers will not be hindered.
- II. Do not fear seasons of preparation

- A. If we refuse to be prepared by God, then we may be used by Him, but we won't be filled with Him
 - 1. The circumstances may not be what we believed they would be, but that is not our concern. Our concern must be to honor God, thus all we do will be honorable
 - a) Romans 5:1-5 - Therefore, having been justified by faith, [a]we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, **2** through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and [b]we exult in hope of the glory of God. **3** And not only this, but [c]we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; **4** and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope; **5** and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.